



# Nebraska Weather and Crops

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service

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**Agricultural Summary:** For the month of February 2006, precipitation averaged less than 50 percent of normal with the exception of the northwest which was near normal. Temperatures dipped below zero at midmonth, but ended well above normal. Wheat conditions declined during the month as concerns grew about soil moisture levels. Soil temperatures were well above normal, signaling an early green-up. Early calving was going well in most areas, with some losses reported in the northwest due to heavy snow and below zero temperatures during midmonth. Producers were marketing grain, preparing for spring planting, and in some parts of the state applying fertilizer.

This release is based on data from FSA county directors, county extension educators, NOAA, and the High Plains Regional Climate Center. County comments and reports can be found at:

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Nebraska/Publications/Crop\\_Progress\\_&\\_Condition/index](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Nebraska/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/index)

For those receiving an e-mail text version of this publication, a complete version including precipitation and soil temperature maps can also be found at the above address.

**Weather Summary:** At the end of February, snow was absent from the majority of the state, with only the northern Panhandle counties reporting snow cover. February precipitation was light with an exception of a heavy snowstorm in the northern Panhandle. Since September 1, accumulated precipitation is below normal for all districts.

**Field Crops Report:** Wheat conditions were below month ago levels and rated 4 percent very poor, 9 poor, 45 fair, 40 good, and 2 excellent. This is also below last year's condition of 60 percent good or excellent. Declines from last month were noted in all major growing districts with poorest conditions in the southwest. Hay and forage supplies rated as adequate or surplus across the majority of the state.

**Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report:** Cattle and Calves condition rated 8 percent fair, 73 good, and 19 excellent, equal to year ago levels. Calving has progressed to 32 percent complete with calf losses reported as average or below.

**The following are comments from Nebraska's FSA County Executive Directors and County Extension Educators:**

### ***NORTHWEST***

DAWES: Precipitation is below average and getting worse.

SIOUX: Calving is underway. A heavy snowstorm brought some moisture and about 12 inches of snow to the area. A week of very cold weather made calving conditions difficult and some calves were lost.

### ***NORTHEAST***

BURT: The continued dry and unseasonably warm conditions have been excellent for cows and new born calves.

CEDAR: Weather conditions have been excellent this year for keeping cows in condition and calving. The good weather has also required less feed.

DIXON: The weather continues to be unseasonably mild. Wet areas from the last snow are beginning to dry up. Producers are staying busy with outside activities in preparation for spring. Conditions for livestock remain excellent. Some farm stored grain is being marketed.

### ***EAST***

DODGE: Mild weather has farmers applying fertilizer and getting planter equipment ready. Conditions are very dry.

MERRICK: Some farm work has begun due to the beautiful weather. All producers report how dry everything is. We need moisture and lots of it this spring for pastures, wheat, hay, and spring planted crops to grow.

SARPY/DOUGLAS: Very dry top soil.

### ***SOUTHWEST***

CHASE: Dry weather continues.

FRONTIER: Calving is going very well for the ranchers, however, moisture is needed. Conditions are becoming very dry.

HAYES/HITCHCOCK: Dry, warm, windy weather continues. Wheat needs moisture.

### ***SOUTH CENTRAL***

ADAMS: Definitely going to need moisture soon!

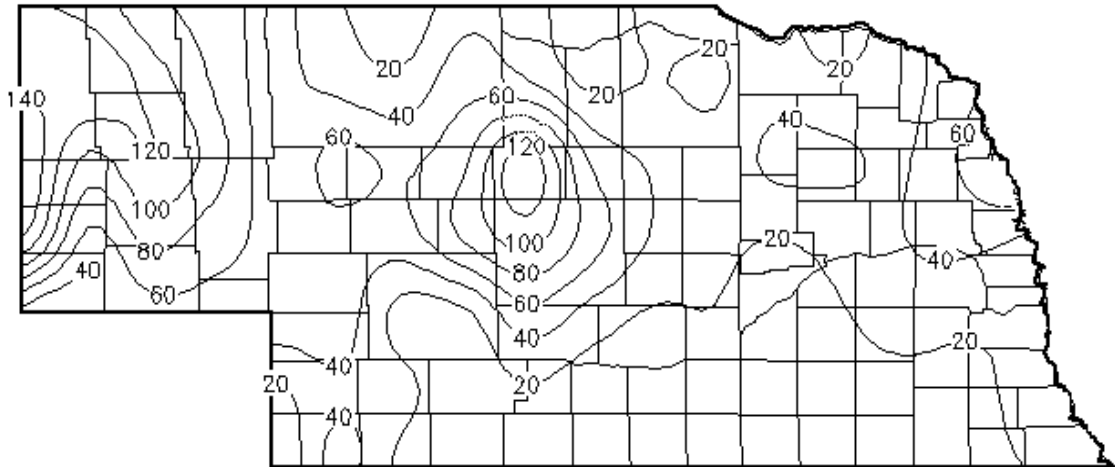
PHELPS: Warm, dry conditions during calving season have helped with calf conditions, such as loss and illness. Dry, warm weather is starting to show stress on the wheat crop. Rangeland will need spring moisture to help improve conditions.

### ***SOUTHEAST***

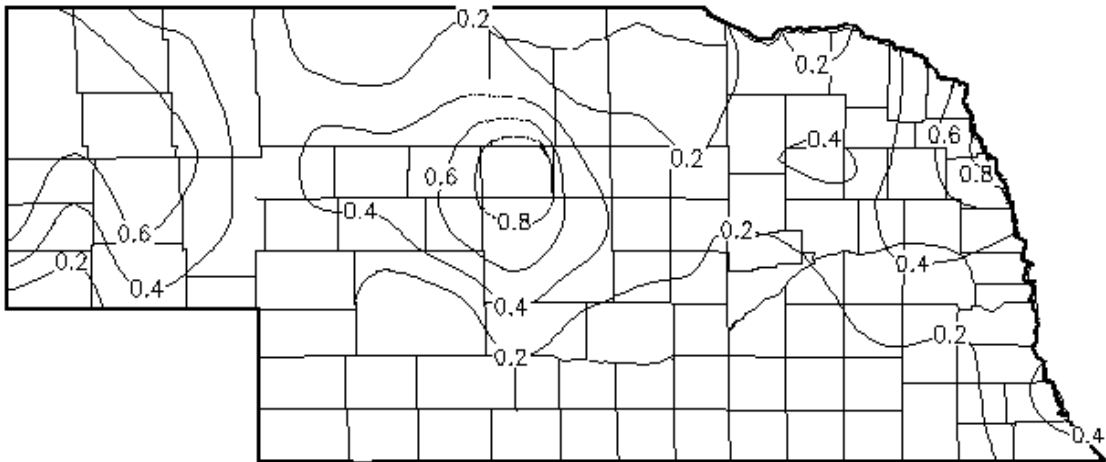
JEFFERSON: Very dry, however, the weather has been excellent for cattle. We need moisture.

RICHARDSON: The weather has been good for calving. Dry weather is becoming a concern as we approach spring.

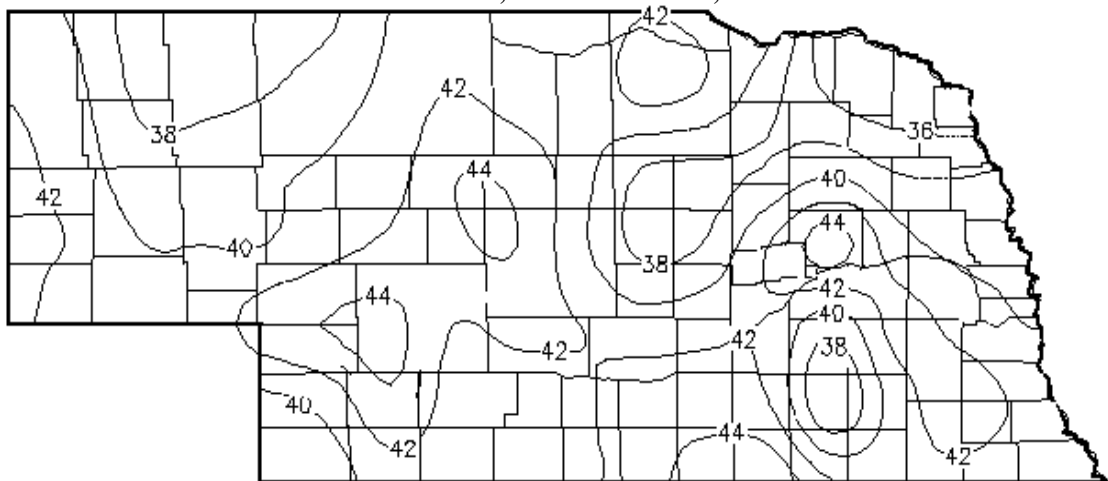
**PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR FEBRUARY 2006<sup>1</sup>**



**PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2006<sup>1</sup>**



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL  
FEBRUARY 27, 2006 - MARCH 5, 2006<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: High Plains Regional Climate Center and Nebraska State Climate Office